

Intervention: Project ALERT

Finding: Mixed evidence

Potential partners to undertake the intervention:

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofits or local coalitions | <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses or labor organizations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools or universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health care providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Local public health departments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State public health departments | <input type="checkbox"/> Policymakers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitals, clinics or managed care organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Background on the intervention:

Project ALERT is a drug prevention curriculum for middle-school students (11 to 14 years old), designed to reduce both the onset and regular use of substances. The two-year, 14-lesson program focuses on the substances that adolescents are most likely to use: alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and inhalants.

Findings from the systematic reviews:

Systematic reviews provide mixed evidence of effectiveness for Project ALERT. Foxcroft, et al., do not recommend the program; while Wiehe, et al., cite insufficient evidence to either recommend or not recommend Project ALERT. Studies by Gorman and White and Pitts find that the initial results rapidly dissipate in the longer term.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the Office of Educational Research and Information (OERI), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) cite Project ALERT as a model or exemplary program. See the links below for more information.

Limitations/Comments:

A companion program, ALERT PLUS, has been created with the intent of extending Project ALERT. The ALERT PLUS curriculum includes lessons in the ninth and tenth grades. It is recommended by NIDA.

Additional information:

Project ALERT - www.projectalert.com

References:

Foxcroft DR, Ireland D, Lister-Sharp DJ, Lowe G, Breen R. Longer-term primary prevention for alcohol misuse in young people: a systematic review. *Addiction* 2003 Apr; 98(4):397-411.

Gorman DM. Are school-based resistance skills training programs effective in preventing alcohol misuse? *Journal of Alcohol & Drug Education* 1995; 41(1):74-98.

White D, Pitts M. Educating young people about drugs: a systematic review. *Addiction* 1998 Oct; 93(10):1475-1487.

Wiehe SE, Garrison MM, Christakis DA, Ebel BE, Rivara FP. A systematic review of school-based smoking prevention trials with long-term follow-up. *J. Adolesc. Health* 2005 Mar; 36(3):162-169.

NIDA - [Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide](http://www.nida.nih.gov/Prevention/Prevopen.html) - www.nida.nih.gov/Prevention/Prevopen.html

OERI - [Exemplary and Promising: Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Programs](http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01) - www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01

SAMHSA - [National Registry of Effective Programs](http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov) - www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov